

Message Text

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ORIGIN OFA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 OES-03 COME-00 EB-07 INT-05 L-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 DOTE-00 DLOS-03 NSF-01

PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 /041 R

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R 122243Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NASSAU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055766

E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: EFIS, BF

SUBJECT: SPINY LOBSTER

REF: A. NASSAU 384; B. NASSAU 181; C. STATE 7860

1. DEPT SHARES EMBASSY VIEW RE DESIRABILITY OF INITIATING CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH BAHAMAS ON SPINY LOBSTER PRIOR TO GCOB ATTEMPT ENFORCE CONTINENTAL SHELF CLAIM TO SPINY LOBSTER. HOWEVER, PRESENTING TECHNICAL INFORMATION TO BAHAMIANS BY MAIL PRIOR TO JOINT SCIENTIFIC REVIEW WOULD POSE SERIOUS RISK OF MISINTERPRETATION THAT COULD JEOPARDIZE EFFORTS ARRANGE CONTINUED ACCESS FOR U.S. FISHERMEN.

2. AS EMBASSY AWARE, COMPREHENSIVE DATA ON RESOURCE AND FISHERY ARE NOT AVAILABLE AND MAY NOT BE FOR SOME TIME. ULTIMATELY, SUCH COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH COOPERATIVE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH
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EFFORT INVOLVING SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN AREA INCLUDING

BAHAMAS. INFERENCES FROM MATERIAL COLLECTED THUS FAR FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS WITH GCOB WOULD HAVE TO BE DRAWN FROM LIMITED SAMPLES RE (A) RECRUITMENT OF SPINY LOBSTER FROM OTHER AREAS OF CARIBBEAN, (B) FISHING EFFORT (WHICH CARRIES ON DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE RESOURCE), (C) VARYING SUSTAINABLE YIELDS FOR DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE RESOURCE,

AND (D) CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS. TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, SUCH INFORMATION COULD APPEAR UNDULY SELF-SERVING. ON THE OTHER HAND, PORTIONS COULD ALSO BE CITED OUT OF CONTEXT TO JUSTIFY UNDULY REPRESSIVE MEASURES FOR THE FISHERY.

3. WHILE COMPREHENSIVE DATA ON RESOURCE AND FISHERY ARE NOT AVAILABLE, ENOUGH INFORMATION DOES PRESENTLY EXIST SO THAT SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE WOULD BE USEFUL. THUS, EMBASSY SHOULD CONSIDER FURTHER APPROACHES TO APPROPRIATE BAHAMIAN OFFICIALS WITH A VIEW TOWARD STARTING AT EARLY DATE PRELIMINARY SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PROPOSED REF C. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHELLFISH, FISHERIES MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE055766
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: BSHALLMAN:CSA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750088-0479
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750357/aaaabzal.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN OFA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 NASSAU 384, 75 NASSAU 181, 75 STATE 7860
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <18 DEC 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPINY LOBSTER
TAGS: EFIS, BF, US
To: NASSAU
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006